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# The Religious Question in Mexico

A REPLY TO SEÑOR ENRIQUEZ

(Extract from the Fourth Edition of "The Book  
of Red and Yellow")

BY  
FRANCIS C. KELLEY



15-20696

PUBLISHED BY  
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
CHICAGO  
1915

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# The Religious Question in Mexico.

A REPLY TO SENOR I. C. ENRIQUEZ

By  
FRANCIS CLEMENT KELLEY.

*“So much has been written about the religious difficulties in Mexico, so many groundless accusations against the Constitutionals have been made by the Catholic clergy, that I, as a faithful Catholic and Mexican revolutionist, feel it necessary to answer the numerous charges which are being unjustly heaped upon us. It is a lamentable fact that every one of our accusers, either wilfully or through sheer ignorance, is overlooking the most important laws of the Mexican Constitution. They seem utterly ignorant of the history and the conditions of the country, its people and its aims, about which they are writing. Every one of them is hiding behind the cloak of religious bigotry, and in the name of Christianity and the Catholic religion tries to bring naught but sorrow to a people that is struggling for justice and independence.”*

The paragraph above quoted contains the opening remarks of Señor I. C. Enriquez in his pamphlet, “The Religious Question in Mexico, by a Mexican Catholic.” Readers, however, will have to take the Señor’s word for his Catholicity. That is all we have. No stronger evidence is presented in his pamphlet, though there is considerable evidence that he treats his nominal religion with about the same respect as he treats the truth — which is not saying much for either.

Señor Enriquez has taken the trouble to send a copy of his pamphlet to all the members of the Senate and the Congress of the United States, and to give it a wide circulation generally; all of which indicates that his friends are becoming anxious about American public opinion, which is not at all surprising.

The paragraph I have quoted from his opening is remarkable, in that it promises to show that the accusations made against the Mexican revolutionists, not only by American Catholic writers, but also by ex-President Roosevelt, are “groundless and unjust,” in that it proposes to prove that these accusers are ignorant of the laws of the Mexican Constitution, and the history and present conditions of Mexico, etc.; and in that it even proposes to vindicate the actions of the Constitutionals. I call such an opening “remarkable,” because of the magnitude of

the task to which it pledges its author. Not often does one meet so pretentious a program outlined for a pamphlet of just sixteen pages. My wonder in the beginning at the size of the Señor's bite, was exceeded only by my amusement at the end when I saw that he could not chew it.

The Constitutionalist Apologia, fathered by the Señor Enriquez, is the most wonderful collection of weightless words, proofless assertions, mirthless jokes, and profitless falsehoods with which I have had the misfortune to lose my time for many, many moons. The Señor's task is preëminently one of excusing crime, for he does not take the trouble to offer any proof that the outrages of murder, sacrilege, arson, lust, destruction, suppression of the press, robberies, lootings, etc., did not take place. He *says* they did not, and that is all. Then he at once proceeds to admit that they did, by attempting to excuse them. If they did *not* take place, why devote sixteen pages to the unnecessary task of an apology? If they *did* take place, would it be possible with all the water in the Atlantic Ocean, or all the lies of the Constitutionalist lie factories, to blot them out?

Since, however, the Señor insists on getting before the American public, perhaps I had better gratify him still more by making his name and his task known to a much larger audience. I am led to do this, not only for the sake of publishing the truth in the United States, but also for a reason that concerns the Señor and his friends. They have been grossly deceived about the American people. They were told that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan were bigots "who would be pleased with anything done against the Catholic Church." They were told that the Protestants of the United States would be delighted with any act of the Constitutionlists to injure and hurt the same Church. They believed the numerous lying papers, tracts and booklets, translated into Spanish, and scattered among them to give them the idea that the Protestants of the United States had a mortal hatred for their Catholic brethren. They thought that Catholics here had no standing, no rights that they would dare to claim, no voice that could be heard; and they even suspected that Catholic votes did not count. Now they have had their eyes open. I want to open them still wider. They have discovered that American Protestants, outside of a few bigots whose convictions are like their spelling — badly mixed — at heart desire to be just and honest men and women. They have begun to suspect that neither the President nor the Secretary of State has been correctly pictured to them. They have found that, when the just indignation of American Catholics is aroused, it means business. They have even discovered that Masons in the United States and Masons in Mexico think differently. So, at this late hour, they come forward as "Mexican Catholics" to praise the "poor priests" of Mexico, to hail them as "liberators"; but making "saving" distinctions, they attempt to

throw blame upon the "high orders" of clergy, implying that these are foreigners, wealthy, rapacious, unpatriotic and cruel. With praises for some priests and curses for others, they would have the American Catholic forget that their pens, dipped in falsehood, have handles stained red with the blood on their fingers.

But that will not do, Señor; it will not do at all. We know the story of Mexico. We know what has been done there for over fifty years. We never knew it before. It took martyrs' blood to call our attention to it, and the martyr's blood has not been shed in vain. There are sixteen million Catholics in the United States; and to the last man, woman and child, they have learned or will learn the history of Constitutionalist crimes. They are going to see that justice is done the poor people of Mexico. They are not going to falter in the fight. They will see it through. Make no mistake—they are aroused as never before. You will have religious liberty in Mexico, or there will be a reckoning; and a reckoning that will not end until the sum is totaled up, and put to the discredit, in the books of civilization, of the proper account. It will pay you and your friends, Señor, to weigh carefully what follows.

Your charges, the charges of a "faithful Mexican Catholic," as expressed in your pamphlet, may be summed up thus:

*First.*—That the accusations made against those whom you represent are false.

*Second.*—That the higher clergy of Mexico are the enemies of the people, are robbing them and standing out against their political rights, by intrigue and scheming.

*Third.*—That these same higher clergy ignore and disobey your laws.

Let us see how much truth there is in what you have to say.

ENRIQUEZ.—"*It is a lamentable fact that every one of our accusers, either wilfully or through sheer ignorance, is overlooking the most important laws of the Mexican Constitution.*"

*Answer.*—Your accusers have overlooked no laws in the Mexican Constitution. On the contrary, they have constantly pointed out the kind of laws which Revolutionists have put upon the statute books of a Republic masquerading under the name of a democracy. The demand of American Catholics is based upon a *knowledge of these laws*, which are subversive of the basic principles of democracy, are tyrannical and strike at the very root of the rights which are supposed to be guaranteed by the Mexican Constitution, liberty of conscience. Here is a summary of the Laws of Reform, which I have already published in THE BOOK OF RED AND YELLOW, page 57:



“When the Revolution came, and with it the Laws of Reform of Benito Juarez, an end came also to what little freedom the Church had. She was despoiled of such possessions as had been left her. She was forbidden to teach, which means to open schools of any kind, except of theology. Her ministers even could not dress as clerics. The law of May 13, 1873, forbade any religious demonstration outside of a church building, and forbade clergymen or Sisters to dress in any way that would indicate their calling. The Constitution of 1857 interfered with personal liberty to the extent of forbidding anybody to enter a religious Order, and refused religious Orders a legal right to hold property. The law of July 12, 1859, suppressed religious Orders and religious societies, forbade the foundation of new congregations, ordered all books, manuscripts, prints and antiquities belonging to such Orders to be given up. The law of February 26 suppressed female communities. The law of July 12, 1859, took away all property from the clergy; but that of February 5, 1861, returned to the Church its parochial residences, bishops’ houses, etc. Then September 25, 1873, saw a new law which forbade any religious institution to acquire property or the revenue derived from it. The law of December 14, 1874, struck at the right of the clergy to receive legacies. The law of July 31, 1859, took away from the clergy the right to manage or have anything to do with cemeteries. The law of February 2, 1861, took from the Church her hospitals and charitable institutions, as also did a law of February 28 of the same year. To make it more certain that the Church could not be charitable, the law of August 27, 1904, forbade clergymen to act as directors and administrators, or patrons of private charities, and extended this decree even to include those delegated by clergymen. It will clearly be seen that, under the Constitution and Laws of Reform, the clergy had little power left, and the Church little chance to uplift the people.”

These are the laws of Mexico which Mr. Enriquez says we have ignored. How do American citizens like them? How would they enjoy having such laws put in force against religion in the United States? And these are the very laws, Mr. Enriquez informs us later on in his pamphlet, that the Carranzistas want enforced to the letter. Are these the things that are going to bring happiness “to a people that is struggling for justice and independence”?

ENRIQUEZ.—*Who is this man, who, for fear of divulging his name, signs himself “An American Citizen” ? Why does he fear to make his name known? Is it because he had the audacity to attack President Wilson’s policies, etc.?*

*Answer.*—I can not tell Mr. Enriquez who the gentleman is, or why

he did not sign his name; but I am signing *my name*. I can assure Mr. Enriquez that I do it with a full knowledge of the fact that the only answer thus far made to people who happened to disagree with the Constitutionals, was a shower of bullets from a firing squad. Happily for me I am not in "Constitutionalist" territory; but I am not ignoring the risks. Here, however, assassination is dangerous. I beg to state also that I am making no attack on President Wilson's policies; but I *am* making an attack on looters and bandits, who, in the name of liberty and justice, have strangled every bit of freedom that exists in Mexico, and who know no more about justice than the ordinary mad dog.

ENRIQUEZ.—*Every one who knows anything at all is aware of the fact that Masonry in Mexico is nothing more than a huge joke.*

Answer.—For which statement, Masons will be thankful to Mr. Enriquez. How about the bold demand made on the American Government by the Mexican Scottish Rite, to instantly evacuate Vera Cruz?

And what about the following press sheet, dated February 8, 1915, sent out by the Mexican Constitutionalist Bureau, located in Suite 334, No. 17 Battery place, New York?

"The Name of Huerta Crossed Out from the Books of Freemasonry."  
From *El Pueblo*, Vera Cruz, December 11, 1914.

"He is considered unworthy of belonging to that league because he betrayed the Mexican people and allied himself with the clergy.

"Victoriano Huerta, the accursed Judas, who, during many months, soiled the national territory with the most opprobrious dictatorship, and whose crimes without number have had no precedent in the history of our country, has just been crossed out of the Big Catalogue of Freemasonry, under the grave accusation and indictment of having betrayed the Mexican people.

"The respectable Concordia Lodge, of the town of Jalapa, was the one who initiated this just expulsion, as will be seen by the following document:

"To the Resp.: Gr.: Log.: United Mexican and Free Accepted Masons of the Or.: of Vera Cruz.

"M.: R.: M.: and VV.: HH.:

"In an ordinary session, held on the 24th inst., this respectable, worthy and courageous lodge arrived at the following agreement:

"There having been found in the files of this respectable Lodge a Letter Patent issued by the Grand Lodge of the State of Vera Cruz of

Free and Accepted Masons R.: E.: A.: and A.: under date of the 24th of ——— 1883, so that under No. 4 it should be effective in this Lodge, Concordia No. 17, in this Or.: of Vera Cruz, and where is inscribed as Venerable Master of same the M.: M.: Victoriano Huerta, the Grand Master informed the members and they unanimously agreed to cross out with red ink the name of the bad Mason, Victoriano Huerta, as unworthy of having his name appear in the Masonic Documents, and because of the understanding and alliance he made with the Catholic Clergy, and also for having betrayed the Mexican people. They also agreed to inform the Grand Lodge of Vera Cruz of this decision, requesting it to make it known to all the grand lodges and regular corporations in the Republic, as well as to all the foreign corporations with whom you are on friendly terms.

“In favoring us with information, in the understanding that the laws of the fraternity should be unconditionally obeyed, crossing forever out of the Big Catalogue of Freemasonry, the ex-Mason Victoriano Huerta, we feel sure that all our brothers will approve the inflexibility we have brought to bear in this case, with the idea of preserving the soundness of the order and purity of Freemasonry.’”

The Grand Master:  
MARCELINO SANCHEZ.

The Secretary:  
N. NEVRAMONT.

From this it appears that General Huerta was guilty of two capital crimes: One, the first and most important, of having been a Catholic, which every one knows is what is meant by an “alliance with the Catholic clergy”: the other, secondary, of “having betrayed the Mexican people.” To the eyes of Latin Masonry the first is the “crime” most deserving of punishment — the unforgivable sin.

If “every one who knows anything at all is aware of the fact that Masonry in Mexico is nothing more than a huge joke,” why pass the action of the “huge joke” on to the press of the United States, as something of such great importance to the Constitutional cause, as to justify a prayer to all American editors, to “kindly use this matter in the bulletin as liberally as your space will permit”? And why, if Mexican Masonry does not concern itself with religion and politics, as others would have us believe, should General Huerta be expelled for an “alliance he made with the Catholic Clergy”? It will enlighten the members of the craft in these United States, in England, Canada and the British Islands, who still believe in God and religion, to know that the Catholic Church has here the unmistakable proof of what it has long pointed out



to them, the fact that Latin-Masonry looks upon "alliance with the Catholic Clergy," as full justification for expulsion and hatred, and worthy of approval as "preserving the soundness of the order and purity of Freemasonry."

*"I thank thee, Roderic, for the word";  
It nerves my heart; it steels my" — pen,*

but the religious Masons of English-speaking nations will "thank thee" more, and see still greater wisdom of the policy they claim to have adopted of not being on "friendly terms" with Latin-Masons.

ENRIQUEZ.—*If the men who plead the cause of the oppressed Mexican Clergy are to be taken at their word, it would seem that the whole Mexican nation is composed of inconsiderate brutes and beasts.*

*Answer.*—The overwhelming majority of the Mexican nation is composed of good, pious and peaceful people, out of whose hands a minority of "inconsiderate brutes and beasts" have taken all arms, all money, a free press, the right to vote, the right to talk, the right to practice their religion; in fact, all rights to which any free people are entitled.

ENRIQUEZ.—*They would like to create the impression that murder and rapine are rampant in that country, and that the main attacks are directed against the Catholic Clergy.*

*Answer.*—It seems that it has been easy to create the impression. On page 10 of THE BOOK OF RED AND YELLOW, and following for a number of pages, is the whole story, giving dates, names of cities, names of persons, in fact, the fullest information that can be squeezed within the pages of a pamphlet for general circulation. *If the statements are "ridiculous," why not answer them?* The Constitutionals are on trial before the court of American public opinion, for they are asking the United States to recognize them as the legitimate rulers of Mexico. They must bring before the court something more than mere statements. The evidence is in on the one side, and Señor Enriquez in his rebuttal presents none. There are lawyers enough in the Senate and Congress of the United States to know how to treat a case unsupported by evidence.

ENRIQUEZ.—*The first thing our soldiers did when we entered a city was to seek out the houses of worship and offer our prayers in thanks to Him Who brought us victory.*

*Answer.*—Undoubtedly, there is a grain of humor in the Señor Enriquez. However, he is right in part, for certainly *his friends did go to the churches!* When they got there they shot at the statues; stole the

pictures and sent them to America for sale; desecrated the sanctuaries; expelled such priests as had no money; took out the confessionals and burned them in the public squares; fed the Blessed Sacrament to horses; did unmentionably vile things with the sacred vessels; used the vestments for horse blankets; and then, in order to make sure that their "thanks" would be properly offered to the God Who "gave them victory," *shot some of the priests*. Yes, there is no doubt that the Señor Enriquez is right: "*The first thing they did was to go to the houses of worship.*"

ENRIQUEZ.—*To understand the true causes and reasons of dissension and strife between the people and certain members of the High Catholic Clergy, one must go back to the first struggles of Mexico against the Spanish domination. It is the same struggle.*

*Answer.*—It is the same struggle? Yet for over fifty years the Spaniards have been out of Mexico. The Church has had no legal existence in Mexico. There has been no union of Church and State in Mexico. Clergymen have been forbidden by law even to wear a clerical collar on the streets of Mexico. Bishops have been arrested for blessing a cemetery in Mexico, even for attempting to lay a cornerstone; for presiding over a gathering of children at Christmas time to make presents to the little ones of Mexico. The Church has not been allowed to receive a bequest in Mexico. She has not been allowed to hold property in her own name in Mexico. Inheritance taxes aimed at her confiscate any property she may have in the names of private individuals, by three transfers in Mexico. Yet it is the same struggle? For over fifty years, the Church has been bound hand and foot; and the Constitutionals assert that, shackled and manacled, she still is such a power that a new revolution is necessary to prevent her from cutting liberty's throat. This is one of the mirthless jokes of the Señor Enriquez.

ENRIQUEZ.—*The rulers of Spain left, but many of their harmful institutions stayed behind, and it is these institutions, which have been slowly devouring the minds of the Mexican people, which usurped all their rights, and keep them in ignorance, that we Mexicans are still fighting and struggling against.*

*Answer.*—In order to struggle intelligently against these institutions left by the Spaniards, you close schools, destroy colleges, loot laboratories, scatter manuscripts to the four winds of heaven, sell valuable books and typewriters for a few cents, and throw thousands of Mexican children out of the one chance they had to get an education. Our plan in the United States is to encourage every means of educating the people. The

Mexican Constitutionalist plan is to discourage it. Spanish institutions? Enoch, an English Protestant, says: "The Mexican of to-day owes all he has — law, literature, art and social system, and refinements of law and religion — to Spain."

ENRIQUEZ.— *To say that we are nothing short of murderers, that we wantonly persecute the priests and the nuns, is to slander the Mexican nation.*

*Answer.*— Pardon me, let us make a distinction. To say that the Carranzista bandits wantonly persecuted the priests and nuns, is not indicting the Mexican nation; for there are sixteen million people in Mexico who want peace and order, law and religion, and there are not more than two hundred thousand who have been deceived by the self-seekers who hired blinded fools to kill, and paid them with liberty to commit every lustful crime in the calendar. Why are the poor women of Torreon wearing black?

ENRIQUEZ.— *Does any one believe that a nation which attained its freedom by the aid of its priests, would, a few years later, turn against them?*

*Answer.*— They have not turned against them. On the contrary, the people want them. See in THE BOOK OF RED AND YELLOW the Story of Yucatan, page 44, and the pitiful appeal made to the Carranzista governor by the women of the State, not to expel their priests. What about the rising of the people in Morelia? (vide page 54).

ENRIQUEZ.— *But the priests who fought for the liberty of the Mexican peons are not the high Church dignitaries of to-day.*

*Answer.*— This is to intimate, of course, that the high Church dignitaries of to-day are Spaniards; *but there is not a single Spaniard holding a Bishop's See in Mexico.* Every single bishop in Mexico is a Mexican. Every one of them is a patriotic Mexican; but they have what may be considered a weakness in the Señor Enriquez's eyes — a love for law and order. They want a country, not a slaughter-house. They prefer ballots to bullets. They want liberty of conscience and freedom of worship, and a chance to educate their people; all of which has been denied for over fifty years.

ENRIQUEZ.— *Those who failed to obey, or showed the least sign of disobedience, were punished, with the well-known Spanish Inquisition, the tortures of hell.*

*Answer.*— Strange statement from one who reproaches us with ignorance of Mexico's history. The Mexicans were, by special royal

decree, exempt from the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, which was a state institution in Mexico, as it was in Spain.

ENRIQUEZ.—*By such means (land grants, inheritances, etc.), the Church and certain high dignitaries of the Church, became the Supreme Power of Mexico.*

*Answer.*—If that is true, why was it that Bishop Las Casas had to fight the State in order to secure the rights of the Indians? Why was the Church obliged to constantly barter with Spain for the liberties of the natives?

ENRIQUEZ.—*It was to these poor native priests that the oppressed and down-trodden Mexicans went in time of dire need.*

*Answer.*—Among the hundreds of exiles here and in Cuba, two-thirds are the same poor priests, some Indian priests. We had to find bread for them to eat and clothes to wear. I know how much wealth they possessed, for I saw and spoke to them. Señor Enriquez prints a letter which, he says, was written by the Archbishop of Mexico. That letter states that the salary of the Archbishop, himself, was 750 pesos a month, which means \$325 in our money. With that he had to maintain his entire establishment. Now, the Archbishop of Mexico is the highest dignitary in the Mexican Church; so for the food, clothing, servants, household expenses and charities of the highest of the high Catholic Clergy there was \$325 a month. By the way, did the Señor Enriquez ever hold a public office in Mexico? If he did, how much salary did he get? According to the same letter, Canons of the Cathedral of Mexico received 120 pesos a month, which is \$60 of our money. The choir chaplains got from thirty to forty dollars, which is *from fifteen to twenty dollars a month* in our money. These “high clergy” in Mexico certainly are living in luxury and robbing the people. If an average were struck of the gifts to the Church by the Mexican peon, it would show *less than twenty cents per capita per year*. This is fine robbery.

ENRIQUEZ.—(*Quoting from another*) “*Indeed, a careful estimate of the revenue of the Church, just previous to the War of Independence, reveals the enormous figure of \$50,000,000 a year.*”

*Answer.*—Yet Professor Noll, very prejudiced and anti-Catholic, estimates it about \$90,000,000 *in capital*. There is a big difference between a *capital* of ninety million and a *revenue* of fifty million annually. In order to get this properly before people who think, let them estimate the revenue of, say, the Episcopal Church in the United States. Make as conservative an estimate as you please of the revenue of its missionary societies — home, foreign and diocesan — its schools, colleges, universi-



ties, churches, pension funds, endowments of all kinds. Then stir in the fact that there are about fifteen million Mexican Catholics, to less than one million American Episcopalians, and serve hot.

Is it a horrible crime for a clergyman to seek the means of livelihood? Why not condemn the twelve Apostles? As long as there is a dollar not yet sent to the banks of El Paso, San Antonio, New York and Paris, against the great day of the exodus, the Constitutionals have a bone to pick with the clergy. But are the clergy of Mexico rich? I happen to know that the Constitutionals secured the private papers of the bishops, copies of their last wills and testaments, the diocesan records of each, and the Chancery ledgers. They must know, then, all about the wealth of the clergy of Mexico. Then, why content themselves with assertions when it would be so easy to publish the facts and proofs? "There's a reason." The books and records will not bear out the Constitutionalist assertions.

ENRIQUEZ.—*The Church had become such a powerful force in the political life, due to its enormous possessions, that it could change the government any time it wished to do so.*

*Answer.*—How? By votes? If the high Church dignitaries could change the government any time they wished to do so in that way, the people could not have been against them. As Mexican citizens, the high Church dignitaries would have had the right to take the same interest in politics that any other citizen takes; and it is up to the people to judge. If they judged that it was time to change a government, is not that within their democratic rights? Where is your complaint? As a matter of fact, however, since there were no such things as honest elections, by what other means could the bishops change the government? By revolutions? When did they rebel? Who led the revolutions? Who supplied the money? Hand us out the facts; that's what we are after. Or, if these high Church dignitaries could change the government when they wished, inform us why they did not change the Laws of Reform. Would they have kept these oppressive laws over themselves for fifty years, when they could have changed them by the simple operation of changing the government? Is your humor again getting the better of you, *mi estimable Señor?*

ENRIQUEZ.—*The Revolutionists devoted much of the new Constitution to the elimination and the divorce of the Church from the State.*

*Answer.*—Let me see, did not the Señor say that the present Revolution of Carranza is the "same struggle" as that of the Revolution against

Spain; and that the Constitutionals are trying to separate Church and State now? But they were separated years ago. Vat iss?

ENRIQUEZ.—*Of late much has been written about the ignorance and immorality prevalent among the poor classes of the Mexican populace. It is said that a large majority of them totally disregard the marriage ceremony and live in open violation of the sacraments of marriage . . . An investigation has proven that the price for marriage sacraments, instituted by the high Catholic Clergy, is so unreasonably high, that it is almost impossible for the poor to meet it.*

The answer to part of this statement comes from a most unexpected source. I take the following from the editorial columns of *The Churchman* (Protestant Episcopal), of February 6, 1915:

“Mr. William Watson, who has lived for nearly eight years in Mexico in some of its best-known centers of population, uses vigorous language in criticising the statements regarding the religious condition of Mexico that appear in the American press. He does not agree with those who ascribe the present revolution to religious causes. While the uprising is supposedly conducted for the benefit of the unpropertied class, the *peon*, it seems strange, he says, that their churches suffer just as much from robbery and outrage as the churches of the rich. Dealing with the question of ecclesiastical fees, Mr. Watson finds much exaggeration in recent reports. In the places where he has lived, Puebla, Oaxaca, Guadalajara and Mexico City, baptisms cost from 33 cents to 69 cents; it has been asserted that they cost \$5. Marriage fees are from \$2.50 to \$3; requiems cost 50 cents; special prayers, 5 cents; confirmation, 15 cents; confessions and communions cost nothing. ‘Once a year in all these places mission priests go around holding missions. During the missions baptisms and marriages are gratis, although sometimes 50 centavos is asked for a marriage during a mission.’ When it is also taken into consideration that the Roman Church has no ‘envelope system’ for its support, but depends upon these methods for collecting from the poor people, it will be seen that the *peon* contributes but little to the support of the Church, a fact patent to all who visit their little shrines and see their priests. The Roman Church has also a practice of asking for *Diezmos*, or the Jewish tenth. But this does not touch the *peon*, who has no land or money. The *Diezmo* is given on New Year’s Eve. People with money are always charged according to their ability to pay. It is commonly reported that the Roman Church is responsible for the ignorance of the people. This is not true, either. In Mexico City there are many fine schools controlled by the Church, and there are not more than three or four decent buildings built by the State for school purposes. The Church has schools because

the public schools do not begin to make provision for the children. Over fifty years ago, Juarez robbed the Church of their all in order to benefit the people, just as the present warring factions are doing. And just as the *peons* did not benefit by the Juarez theft, neither will they benefit by it now. Let us be honest about the Roman Church, even if we do not love it."

Mr. Watson is certainly honest about the Church that he does not love. I would change only a word of his letter — the word "*cost*." There is no "*cost*." The Church permits *offerings* on the occasion of marriages, baptisms, etc. "*Cost*" implies that a price is put on a spiritual benefit. As a matter of fact, the offering is not required from those who state that they are unable to make it. In many parts of Latin-America the clergy have no other means of support apart from these offerings. An offering is not even *permitted* on the occasion of confession.

As to the assertion that many Mexican men and women live together, without the marriage ceremony; I do not doubt but that Mexico has its share of immorality. That is not to be wondered at, since the State has been striving for half a century to break down the religious life of the people. What is to be wondered at is the Carranza remedy. That remedy is outlined in a decree published by the "First Chief," quite recently. His plan to prevent the lower classes of Mexicans from living in open violation of the sacrament of marriage, is to *legalize this sort of prostitution by allowing divorce by mutual consent*. He figures, I suppose, that there will be a great many more ceremonies, every couple contributing from ten to fifty during a lifetime; since, each three years, the decree permits the married pair to separate and each to select a new consort. Now, in Mexico, as is explained in THE BOOK OF RED AND YELLOW, people like to have the marriage ceremony at their houses. That costs sixteen pesos, plus the price of the two carriage trips to bring the civil official to the two ceremonies. The Church expects an offering from those who are able to give it, but nothing from the poor. The civil official must have his carriages and fees. The Constitutionalist remedy will be a fine thing for the civil officials, since the Church is not to be permitted to solemnize marriages. All fees are to be thrown into the hands of the officers of the State. This is a method of increasing the revenue of office-holders, which possibly did not occur to our own politicians. Surely, Señor Carranza deserves credit for pointing out a chance we overlooked.

ENRIQUEZ.— *But the greatest tragedy of the Catholic Church in Mexico is that it is a house very much divided against itself. It possesses no unity of purpose; it has no honest desire to uplift, to educate and alleviate the needs and sorrows of the masses.*

*Answer.*—This will certainly be news to the great number of intelligent Americans, who think that the Catholic Church has a considerable unity of purpose and is anything but divided against itself. In fact, it is one institution in the world which is known to have the strongest unity of purpose, and which will tolerate no serious division within. However, it would be rather hard for the Church to possess any more than an "*honest desire* to educate and alleviate the needs and sorrows of the masses" in Mexico, because if it tried to carry such an *honest desire* into *practice*, it would find that, in the eyes of the Mexican laws, it does not exist; that it can not build a hospital, a school, an orphanage, a social center, or even a lazaretto, because it has no right under the law to do so. It has no legal right to be charitable, to teach, to nurse the sick, to help the down-trodden, or even to dry the tear of sorrow. When it attempts these things, it has to do them *against the laws*, as Mr. Enriquez acknowledges. In the beginning of his pamphlet, Mr. Enriquez complains that the Church has thus violated the law. Now, he complains that she won't violate it. What does he really want the Church to do?

ENRIQUEZ.—*The true condition of the Catholic Church is that it is composed of wealthy, foreign, high clergymen and of poor priests who are native Mexicans and Indians.*

*Answer.*—Who are the high dignitaries of the Church of Mexico? First, Archbishops — but all are Mexicans; second, Bishops — all Mexicans; third, Vicar-Generals — all Mexicans; fourth, Canons — nine-tenths Mexicans. (I do not know of a single foreigner among the Canons.) These are the dignitaries. Now who are the lesser clergymen? Parish priests of the cities — nine-tenths Mexicans; country pastors — nine-tenths Mexicans; assistant priests — nearly all Mexicans, *but with a good percentage of Spaniards*. Mark you, the largest percentage of foreign clergy is found among the *assistants*. But where there are many Spanish pastors, as in sections of Yucatan, they are there only because they had to be called in as helpers. There was a scarcity of native priests. That is why, too, there are Spaniards among the religious Orders of teachers. It is the policy of the Church in Mexico, as in every country, to secure a native clergy.

ENRIQUEZ.—*They (the clergy) intrigue, they scheme. They are the friends of the reactionary forces; they kow-towed with Diaz when he was in power and used Huerta and his henchman, Dr. Urrutia, when they reigned supreme.*

*Answer.*—And yet Diaz promulgated some of the laws which the "patriotic" Constitutionalists love, because these laws oppressed the Church; and Huerta, though he was only a short time President, left one



as a souvenir of his dictatorship. Does it ever occur to Señor Enriquez that the laws of the Church require Catholics to obey the civil power and respect the civil authority? By what right would the Church or its "high dignitaries" take it upon themselves to decide that they should disobey a President accepted by the people? Diaz was President, recognized by Mexico, recognized by the United States, recognized by every government in the world. Huerta was President of Mexico, recognized by other governments, though not by the United States; but he succeeded to power in obedience to all the forms of Mexican law. If the Church had rebelled against him, we would have had Señor Enriquez and others of his kind pointing out this fact with great triumph. The Church did not rebel. The Church was peaceful and accepted the government that was over its people, as it always does. *Now, it is charged with treason because it did the one thing that it could do without becoming treasonable.* Again I ask what does Señor Enriquez want the Church to do?

As to scheming, what was the Church scheming about? To change the laws so as to give her some liberty? She could claim a right to do that under a democracy. Does the gentleman forget that Mexico was pretending to be a democracy?

ENRIQUEZ.—*In fact, they were the enemies, for they always upheld the benighted forces of Mexico.*

*Answer.*—Who were these benighted forces? Everybody who disagreed with the Constitutionals? Everybody who thought that a pure democracy ought to grant liberty of worship, freedom of education, and the common ordinary natural rights of citizenship? The trouble is that Señor Enriquez and his kind have settled in their own minds what *they want*; and, looking back over the history of Mexico, they coolly dub as traitors everybody who even suggested that what *they want* was not the *best thing* for the country. A democracy is "of the people, for the people and by the people." But in Mexico any one who holds contrary opinions to the small circle of revolutionary "patriots" must be considered as having no rights which their opponents are obliged to respect. This is why Mexico settles her troubles with bullets instead of ballots. Verily, the path of the politician in Mexico is strewn with thorns, and there is danger in his ways.

ENRIQUEZ.—*The shameless manner in which the high Catholic clergy forsook their religious offices and dabbled in politics is illustrated by the numerous letters which were left behind by Dr. Aureliano Urrutia, Minister of Interior in the Huerta cabinet.*

*Answer.*— Señor Enriquez has added six letters to prove this assertion — six *specially selected*. We commend a study of these letters to every one interested.

The first was written by Archbishop Gillow, evidently a personal friend of the Minister, for he addresses him: "Esteemed Sir and Friend." He speaks of certain disturbers who were molesting the authorities, and interfering with public peace. He commends one of the governors, who worked for the well-being of his district. He speaks of false accusations being made by disturbers against this governor. He commends a Judge of the Primary Court of Claims, who is trying to do his duty. He offers his letter for the purpose, as he says, of maintaining "order and peace in this district," and he thanks the Minister in advance for whatever he may deem fit to do in the interests of honest citizens.

This certainly is an "incriminating" letter, and clearly proves that the Archbishop was interested in peace and order; therefore, a splendid example of a "traitor" according to Constitutionalist ideas of what a traitor is.

The next letter is from the Archbishop of Mexico City to the same Minister. It sets forth, that under the "beneficent" laws of Mexico, he was robbed of his home, which was taken over for governmental offices. He asks that it be restored to him. He suggests that some restitution might be made also for the cash, sacred vessels, such as chalices, shrines, lamps, articles of silver, jewels, all stolen from the Cathedral; also for the Seminary building next door, which was likewise taken, and for the houses of his chaplains. He speaks of the poor financial condition of his diocese as a consequence of this robbery; and he asks for restitution *at least in part*. Señor Enriquez calls these "alleged damages." So it is not a sin to steal from an Archbishop. Mexican "professionals" will take note how they may steal without danger.

This Archbishop is a horrible example of a "traitor"; the man actually wants to get back the things he was robbed of. But there is a mitigating circumstance in his favor; he is not a *full* traitor because he would be satisfied with a *part* restitution.

The third letter is from the Archbishop of Puebla. I do not know what it is about, because, as a matter of fact, it does not say anything.

The fourth is from Archbishop Gillow again. It refers to the fact that the Archbishop, with a lawyer and an engineer, had been appointed by General Diaz "to study and report" on some proposed concessions for an international and interoceanic railway. It appears that the Archbishop did not agree with his colleagues, because he did not want to have the

State give up so much money to the concessionaries. He urges that time has proven the correctness of his ideas, and points out two lines, which, in his opinion, are of greater importance to Mexico. He urges the necessity of completing, as soon as possible, the railroad from Mexico to Tehuantepec, via Puebla and Oaxaca. He mentions that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, using Baron Humboldt's expression, is the "bridge of the universe," etc. He speaks of the great importance of such a line to his own State of Oaxaca, and says that he is interested in its construction for the advantage of the people of his diocese. He speaks also of his knowledge of the State and of its riches and possibilities. Practically that is his whole letter.

Another clear proof of "treason." This man was interested in his State, and in the Republic of Mexico. He refused to vote an enormous sum for unnecessary railroad concessions; but points out where, in his opinion, the necessity does exist. That he has a right to do so, and that he was a man whose opinion was worth while, is proven by the fact that the President had appointed him to such an important commission. He places his knowledge at the disposal of the Minister of the Interior, asks for nothing, but points out what he thinks would result in national benefits. I wonder if Senators and Congressmen of the United States could not, each of them, gather up a large series of "incriminating" letters of this kind against "traitors," clergymen of all denominations, in Podunk, Blue Ridge, Pine Grove, and to the uttermost ends of the Republic, pointing out, not benefits such as those which would result in a railroad over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, but benefits in dredging a mud creek. If Señor Enriquez had only known something about American politics, he would not have been trapped into publishing a letter of this kind as a proof of "treason." Why, bless your heart, my dear Señor, letters endorsing even applicants for postoffices are considered as the outpourings of patriots, and clergymen write them every day.

The fifth letter is from the Minister to the Archbishop. He acknowledges having received the suggestion and of having considered it. He believes that such a railroad is of great importance, not only from the military point of view, but for the convenience of the public in general. He promises to take an interest in it when circumstances permit.

There is no doubt that such a letter as this, coming from the Minister of the Interior, should be punished with death. I shall always, in the future, with Señor Enriquez's standards of patriotism before me, look with grave suspicion upon any Cabinet officer of the United States, who ventures to suggest any improvement of any kind whatever, or to take

an interest in any public work that might possibly be of advantage to the people.

The sixth and last letter is supposed to be from the Archbishop of Michoacan to the same Minister. It is unnecessary for me to quote from the letter, because I am acquainted with the real Archbishop of Michoacan. This letter is dated September 11, 1913, and is signed "Jenaro Mendez." It happens that the Archbishop of Michoacan's name is not Jenaro Mendez, but Leopoldo Ruiz. It is up to Mr. Enriquez to explain whether he is lying only to the extent of attempting to palm off another man's letter as that of the Archbishop of Michoacan, or whether he invented the whole letter and signed another name, to avoid incarceration in the penitentiary for forgery. This, you see, would be a real danger, because both Señor Enriquez and the real Archbishop of Michoacan are now in the United States, where forgery is punishable, and where the fact that a man happens to be a clergyman of any rank, does not prevent his securing the protection of the law.

Americans will quickly see that in Mexico, under the rule of the Constitutionalists, a clergyman dare not even suggest his ideas on *any subject* without danger of being looked upon as a traitor.

ENRIQUEZ.—*At the same time while they are demanding protection for their co-religionists in Mexico, Germany is devastating one Catholic country after another.*

Answer.—Germany is engaged in a war. Catholics of Germany are fighting for their country, as are Catholics of England, Belgium and France for theirs. Neither side is in a war of destruction against religion. If churches and religious houses suffer, it is not *because* they are buildings consecrated to God, but because they are in the line of fire. If priests and sisters are killed, it is not *because* they are priests and sisters, but because they happen to be on duty where the shots fall. Bullets do not select landing-places for themselves. Mexico, however, is at war with no other country. She is killing her own citizens to settle political questions that long ago she promised to settle with ballots. She is in the hands of anarchy, upheld by disciples of anarchy, who destroy churches and religious houses *because they are churches and religious houses*. She kills and exiles priests and sisters *because they are priests and sisters, and for no other reason*. There lies the difference.

ENRIQUEZ.—*The cries of clergymen that the United States swoop down upon Mexico and at the point of a gun perpetuate the power of the Catholic Church, is in itself the greatest indictment against the leaders who are working in that direction. . . . The American people and the*



*Washington Administration are beginning to realize that not all is well with high Catholic dignitaries in Mexico.*

*Answer.*—Why drag in the Washington Administration? If the Washington Administration has no right to concern itself about the affairs of Mexico, as Mr. Carranza has time and time again intimated to the Administration in most insulting terms, what interest has the Washington Administration in the condition of the “high Catholic dignitaries in Mexico”? What interest has the Senate and Congress of the United States, to whom the Señor has been careful to send his pamphlet? Your “First Chief” has told the United States to mind its own business, yet you insist now that it should consider the Catholic Clergy. Is not this asking intervention of your own kind?

Now *we* do not want intervention of any kind. We want the noise in the next house, which threatens to give us no rest at all, stopped permanently, when it does stop. It is *our right* to recognize a neighbor or refuse to recognize him. We have already exercised that right with Mexico, and we can exercise it again. We can say to Mexico: “Live up to your professions; take the pledge and keep it; then I’ll recognize you, not before.” Do you see the point, Señor? Our Government is *representative*, and there is no member of it who does not know that fact. There is a *sentiment* aroused now by the wholesale killings, and robberies, and crimes of your friends. That sentiment will not down. It is speaking to you now, and its voice is penetrating enough to be heard as far as Mexico, *via* representative government.

It is scarcely necessary for me to ask how long it has been since this good Catholic from Mexico has been to confession; how long since he has seen the inside of a Catholic church for spiritual purposes; how long since he has heard a Catholic sermon; and how much he knows of a very small but compact little book of doctrine known as the Penny Catechism. Had he known the little book, he would have known that the Founder of the religion he says he professes, hated a liar and condemned him to penalties equivalent almost to that of living under the Constitutionals. He would have known that “to bear false witness against your neighbor” is one of the crimes forbidden by the Commandments given on Mount Sinai. Had he listened to sermons, he would have known that it is the mission of the Church to teach, and her glory to educate the people and to uplift the poor. He would have known that any law made in manifest opposition to that right, is a law for which no Christian nation can have any sympathy, or could tolerate. He would have known that the worst of all forms of tyranny is that tyranny which strikes at the natural rights of mankind. Had he placed his case before the tribunal of penance, he

would have known that theft, sacrilege, lust and murder can not be apologized for, but are simply crimes in the eyes of God and man. If the Señor Enriquez is a "faithful" Mexican Catholic, I would pray daily to deliver me from the evil of many such as he. But since it is plain that he is an utter stranger to the truths that his Faith would have taught him, had he given it a chance, I will ask him to open another book, the Constitution of the United States of America, and read the principles that are the foundation of the liberties enjoyed by the people of a democracy which has proven a success, and in which the State has no quarrel with the Church, and the Church no quarrel with the State. He could there learn what principles underlie the convictions of the American people, and see how foolishly have his friends acted, in their desire to win our friendship, by presuming that we are anarchists instead of republicans.

It was Abraham Lincoln who said that no State could exist "half slave and half free." He might have gone farther and said: that there can be no pariahs in a democracy. The Constitutionalists have proclaimed their intention of adding to the Laws of Reform and disfranchising the clergy. In other words, they want a nominal democracy in Mexico, with the clergy for pariahs. They want to cut off one of the largest sections of their educated population from using that education for the benefit of their country. There is something to be said, but very little, in favor of the idea that state servants should abstain from voting, but what can be said for the idea that churchmen, receiving no support from the State, and living on the free offerings of the people whom they serve, should be deprived of one of the first and most essential rights of citizenship. The Señor Enriquez may say, perhaps, that it is because they disobey the laws. He has already intimated that we must face that charge against the clergy of Mexico. Very well, we will face it, face it gladly, pleased, indeed, that he gives us the opportunity.

The clergy have "ignored the laws," he says, of the Mexican Republic. He means that the clergy have disobeyed these laws — that the Church has disobeyed them. And it is perfectly true that the Church has had institutions of learning and of charity in Mexico contrary to the Laws of Reform. It is also true that Mexico has had, during all the reign of General Diaz, a dictatorship; and it is also true that, under that dictatorship, the existence of these institutions was known to the government. It is the government's business to enforce its laws if it wants to enforce them; and when it does not enforce them, it recognizes the fundamental injustice of them. But leave that aside. The Church has disobeyed the laws of Mexico; but she has disobeyed them to a far less degree than the early Christians disobeyed the laws of the Roman Empire; than the

Pilgrim Fathers disobeyed the laws of Great Britain; than the American Colonists disobeyed the laws which imposed the Stamp Tax; than Andreas Hofer disobeyed the laws of Austria; than Irish Catholics and Quakers disobeyed the laws of England; than Hidalgo disobeyed the laws of Spain. Would the Señor Enriquez applaud or condemn disobedience in that?

There are some fundamental rights that the common mind of the human race holds to be above the laws. We do not all agree how far these rights extend, how much is included in them, yet no one doubts but that *the conscience* answers to God and not to human laws. When the Catholic Church in Mexico built her schools and established her works of charity, she did disobey the Laws of Reform. When a country priest in Mexico walked in his cassock to a poor, dying peon, and administered the last sacraments at his bedside, which was outside a church building, clearly he disobeyed the same laws. When three or four good women lived in community for the purpose of nursing the sick, teaching the ignorant or caring for orphans, they were in disobedience of the laws, though the brothel down the street, with its two dozen prostitutes, was not disobeying them. When a Christian Brother taught the poor children to read and write, he certainly was violating the law, and some of them paid the penalty when they fell bullet-ridden at Zacatecas. Yes, the Catholic clergy have disobeyed certain laws; and had they not done so during the last two generations, I question much if the Señor Enriquez would now be able even to read, much less to write; and if the educated class of Mexico would be in existence at all, for most of them received all the education they have from these religious teachers, who violated the Laws of Reform in giving it to them. But in doing this, the clergy did not violate the higher law of God. But they did run risks and raised up against themselves a band of ingrates, whose ingratitude is without parallel in the history of the world.

Señor: Very justly leaving in solitary infamy, as it deserves, the deed that was done on the World's Redeemer by the Tragedy of Calvary, many men — poets, statesmen, historians — have tried to ascertain the basest deed of ingratitude ever wrought. Not one of them has succeeded; for, in ignoble procession history has passed before them, sons who killed their fathers, false friends who slew true friends, daughters who scorned their mothers, wives who stained their husbands' names, rulers who betrayed their people, Catalines who outbetrayed a Brutus, Henrys who outslaughtered a Richard, Neros who outrivaled every other matricide. The task of finding the Mountain of Ingratitude has hitherto proven too great even for a world's quest.

Señor: It is no longer necessary to search. The quest is ended. Not *one* man, but a body of men, flaunting the sacred flag of liberty, invoking the holy name of God, have arisen to curse the Mother who bore them to the family of Civilization, the Mother who guided their shaking steps toward the haven of Truth; the Mother who led them out of the bondage of savagery, away from the temples wherein their ancestors' blood drenched red the stones of the altars of pagan sacrifice. Infamy has found sons, who, claiming their Mother's name, have yet tried to dishonor her; who, protected by the love she so freely gave to all her children, returned a hatred worse than the worst she has known from her most relentless enemies; whose plans, conceived in malice and laid in darkness, are to tear even the faithful from her protecting heart, and drive the Mother herself from the home she builded and ornamented with her labor, into the desert of the world's contempt; whose brutality has outdone the brute; whose malice has been more malicious than revenge; whose lust has been more unsparing than sin's, without any of sin's weak excuses; whose greed has been more rapacious than that of the shark, because even satiety does not appease it.

Señor: There has been written by your friends, the bloodiest and most disgraceful chapter in the history of this new continent, a chapter which now takes from France the shameful badge she has hated to wear, the red badge that marked her as having given to the world its Greatest Terror. They, your friends, have put upon America this crowning infamy, and have left to poor Mexico the bearing of the shame of it, until some, more ungrateful, more vile and more loathsome than yourselves, may arise in the dark days that are to come to outdo you in the effectiveness of your work of destruction. Your country is in the grasp of anarchy. Your coinage is debased. Your riches are in the coffers of strangers. Your people cry for peace. Your children cry for bread. Your temples are profaned. The seats of your judges have been cast down. Your halls of legislation are silent. The chair of your authority is the prey of bandits; and your women — God help them — mothers of your citizens yet unborn, go into mourning for the black memory of the worse than death that has fallen upon them. Mexico, a spectacle for angels and men, no longer can rise to accuse you, for gagged and manacled, she awaits the impending stroke of grace.

Señor: God is not to be mocked. He has been more than patient, but even Infinite Patience must merge into Infinite Justice. Blood calls to the Blood shed on Calvary for peace, and the Blood of Calvary will answer. Outraged Innocence prays to Eternal Innocence, to vindicate purity; and the cry will not echo back to earth unheeded. To-day, in



the noise of the din of a world at war, men can not hear the plaint of poor Mexico; but the Ear of Eternal Justice is not stopped, and the clouds of battle shut out from His Eye no spot on earth where evil deeds are done. There is a new Day of Atonement to come, for there is a God of nations, Who "slumbers not nor sleeps."

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